



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

96-HOUR REPORT

6 JULY 2021

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Statewide – Street Gangs Smuggling Illegal, Dangerous Fireworks into California

(U) The illegal fireworks that have been entertaining and injuring Southern California residents heading into the Fourth of July weekend are increasingly arriving in the state via smuggling, often by criminal street gangs that use the same techniques they employ to distribute drugs, investigators say. The fireworks are then sold online, in parking lots and from warehouses at double or triple their cost. A large majority of them seems to be linked to organized crime, with gangs running them as fundraisers for their criminal enterprise.

SOURCE: 2 July 2021, [Mercury News](#)

(U) El Cajon – Man Arrested After More Than 100 Guns Found at His Home

(U) John Thomas Fencel, 60, was arrested Monday during a search of his residence, where investigators found more than 100 rifles, assault weapons, shotguns, and pistols, according to El Cajon police. Fencel allegedly had additionally stockpiled several thousand rounds of ammunition, including incendiary, tracer, and armor-piercing rounds, along with body armor, a tear gas grenade, and silencers. "Also in the home were numerous machining tools believed to be used in the manufacturing of firearms," police said. The search stemmed from an April traffic stop in El Cajon during which Fencel was arrested for allegedly being in possession of a concealed and loaded ghost gun.

SOURCE: 2 July 2021, [Fox News](#)

(U) Irwindale – 1.5-Tons of Illegal Fireworks Seized, Eight Arrested

(U) Irwindale police on Saturday announced the arrests of eight people and the seizure of 1.5-tons of illegal and dangerous fireworks that were being sold through online, e-commerce sites. Acting on tips from community members, detectives conducted a monthlong investigation and made both misdemeanor and felony fireworks-related arrests beginning in June and ending Friday. The contraband seizure comes days after the Los Angeles Police Department confiscated about 5,000-pounds of illegal fireworks in South LA. That operation led to a detonation that resulted in "catastrophic failure" of a specially designed containment vehicle leaving 17 people injured.

SOURCE: 3 July 2021, [ABC News](#)

(U) Menlo Park – Facebook Tests Alerting Users to Extremist Posts

(U) A Facebook test of pop-up boxes asking people whether they think friends are becoming extremists raised concerns Friday among US conservatives who felt their voices might be stifled. Facebook spokesman Andy Stone said in a Twitter exchange that the alerts sprang from an initiative at the social network to combat violent extremism and dangerous organizations. "Redirect Initiative" features are intended to route people using hate- or violence-related search terms toward resources, education, or outreach groups aimed at more harmonious outcomes, according to Facebook.

SOURCE: 2 July 2021, [Associated Press](#)

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(U) NATIONAL

(U) District of Columbia – 200 US Businesses Hit by Ransomware Attacks After Florida IT Firm Breach

(U) Washington – At least 200 businesses in the US “have been encrypted,” according to Cybersecurity firm Huntress Labs, which has been probing into a recent attack on Kaseya. On 2 July, a computing network management tool by the Florida based IT Firm was targeted into a fresh series of cyber-attacks. In a news interview recently, FBI Director Christopher Wray compared the ransomware threats as like security challenges posed by 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York.

SOURCE: 3 July 2021, [Republic World](#)

(U) District of Columbia – Man Charged After Crashing SUV into Washington Monument Barrier

(U) Washington – US Park Police say Jack Joseph Dessin, 38, crashed his SUV into a barrier around 7:40 p.m. outside the Washington Monument. Witnesses say it was not just a straight-on crash. The suspect was driving around the grass and walkway, nearly hitting visitors. Although nobody was hurt, it appears a couple of those witnesses stepped in to help stop the driver. Authorities said the driver went back to his SUV and pulled out a wallet and laptop, but no gun. There were some odd messages displayed on the driver's SUV. Dessin now faces a charge of attempted assault with a dangerous weapon (automobile).

SOURCE: 5 July 2021, [Fox News](#)

(U) Massachusetts – Police Arrest Group of 'Heavily Armed Men' Claiming to 'Not Recognize Our Laws'

(U) Wakefield – According to local police, during a motor vehicle stop, several heavily armed men claiming to be from a group called Moorish American Arms exited their vehicles and fled into the wood line near Interstate Highway 95. The incident unfolded around 1:30 a.m. when a state trooper came across a group of 8 to 10 people refueling on the side of the I-95 highway in Wakefield, a suburb of Boston. The group was dressed in military-style uniforms, carried tactical gear like body cameras and helmets, and had long guns slung over their shoulders. They told officials they were on their way to Maine from Rhode Island for "training," and do 'not recognize our laws.' In all, nine people were arrested.

SOURCE: 3 July 2021, [Associated Press](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) China – Security Force Warns Against Mourning Police Attacker

(U) Hong Kong – Hong Kong's national security police took over the investigation into the stabbing of a policeman and cautioned citizens from mourning the attacker's death, calling the incident a domestic terrorist attack on the 24th anniversary of the former British colony's return to Chinese rule. The National Security Department, which investigates offenses that endanger national security, is now probing the 1 July incident that occurred on a busy street in one of the city's most popular shopping districts. The attacker, an unnamed 50-year-old man who local media said worked for a soy-milk maker, used a knife to wound a male police officer from behind before turning it on himself.

SOURCE: 3 July 2021, [Bloomberg](#)

(U) Germany – Encrypted Chat Data Leads to Major Drug Investigations

(U) Berlin – German security officials said Tuesday that they had arrested more than 750 people and seized large amounts of drugs after accessing extensive chat data on encrypted cell phones. The focus of the investigation was on data from users of provider Encrochat involved in illegal drug trafficking. According to the statement, Dutch and French officials helped with the investigation, and seized 3.2-metric tons of cannabis, about 700-pounds of "synthetic drug," more than 125,500 ecstasy pills, about

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880-pounds of cocaine, and 22-pounds of heroin. Also confiscated were 310 weapons, more than 12,200 ammunition, and assets worth \$223 million.

SOURCE: 6 July 2021, [Illinois News Today](#)

(U) Lebanon – Drug Trade Booms Likely with Help from Hezbollah

(U) Beirut – Lebanese security forces say they have launched dozens of operations in recent months in search of laboratories manufacturing Captagon pills, while closely monitoring coastal and land borders with Syria to identify smuggling routes. Captagon is an amphetamine, and one of the most used drugs on Middle East battlefields. Lebanon's fight against drugs, though, is an uphill battle amid multiple overlapping crises, notably its economic collapse and political paralysis. Many suspect Hezbollah facilitates the illicit drug trade to finance its operations while maintaining plausible deniability of involvement.

SOURCE: 5 July 2021, [Arab News](#)

(U) Pakistan – Security Advisor Accuses India of Orchestrating Lahore Bomb Attack

(U) Islamabad – Moeed Yusuf, Pakistan's national security adviser, has accused India of financing, planning, and carrying out a deadly bombing in the eastern city of Lahore late last month, saying an investigation links the attack directly to India's intelligence services. "We have identified the main mastermind and the handlers of this terrorist attack, and we have absolutely no doubt or reservation in informing you that the main mastermind belongs to RAW, the Indian intelligence agency, is an Indian national and is based in India." The explosion took place on 23 June in the Johar Town area of Lahore, outside the residence of Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, founder of the Lashkar-e-Taiba armed group and designated as a "terrorist" by the US, the UN, and Pakistan.

SOURCE: 5 July 2021, [Al Jazeera](#)

(U) Russia – FSB Thwarts String of Terror Plots in Russia

(U) Moscow – Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) says it has prevented a series of terrorist attacks in Moscow, as well as in the Kabardino-Balkaria and Astrakhan Regions. Two terrorists were detained, and another six were eliminated, the FSB Public Relations Center told TASS on Monday. According to the FSB, two terrorist attacks were prevented in Moscow, and both suspects were detained. In the Astrakhan Region and Kabardino-Balkaria, six members of the terrorist organization were eliminated.

SOURCE: 5 July 2021, [TASS](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

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